



MAYOR & COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

September 21, 2010

Subject: Update on 4th Avenue/Fontana Bike Boulevard Project
(Wards 3 and 6)

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Issue – Mayor and Council is being provided with an update on the status of the 4th Avenue/Fontana Avenue Bicycle Boulevard project.

City Manager's Office Recommendation – This update is provided for informational purposes only and no action is required of Mayor and Council. Staff are available to answer any questions.

Background – On March 03, 2009, Mayor and Council adopted Resolution 21227 authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to provide \$300,000 in RTA funding for design and construction of the 4th Avenue/Fontana Bike Boulevard project.

This is Tucson's first planned Bicycle Boulevard. The project is located along 4th Avenue and Fontana Avenue from University Boulevard to Prince Road. Design is now complete and construction is scheduled to begin this fall.

The project features many of the same elements that are found along the 3rd Street/University Bikeway, which is the most popular bicycle facility in Tucson. The 3rd Street/University Bikeway is also slated to be upgraded to Bicycle Boulevard with funding from the RTA later this year.

The concept plan for the 4th Avenue/Fontana Avenue corridor was produced in 2008 by the Drachman Institute with input and direction from the Amphi, Keeling, El Cortez Heights, Northwest, Feldman's, and West University Neighborhood Associations.

The Tucson Department of Transportation began implementation of the project with considerable outreach to the neighborhoods and citizens who live along the corridor. Public input was obtained from three open houses held in August 2009 and a final open house in October 2009 showing the updated plan. In May 2010, a neighborhood mailer was sent to all properties located within ¼ mile of the corridor. The mailer included an educational pamphlet describing project changes and included a post card to be returned should the resident have any objections with the project. Out of the 2,600 mailers, only 20 (less than 1 %) were returned.

Support has been received for this project and Bicycle Boulevards in general from each of the neighborhoods along the corridor, from the Tucson-Pima County Bicycle Advisory Committee, and from the Landscape Advisory Committee.

Project Description – The design of this bicycle boulevard follows national guidelines that encourage the use of five elements to convert a regular residential street into a bicycle boulevard.

- **Signage and Pavement Markings**– new bicycle boulevard signage will be installed along the corridor to help with wayfinding and to note the distance to key destinations along the route. The signs will also help to brand the Bicycle Boulevard concept. Pavement markings will help illustrate to motorists that the roadway is shared with bicycles and will instruct bicycles where to ride in the road.
- **Traffic Calming Devices**– To keep vehicle speeds reasonably slow on the Bicycle Boulevard, six new traffic circles, five new speed tables, and one median island will be added. These will complement the existing eight speed tables and three traffic circles along the route.
- **Traffic Reduction**– Besides slowing vehicle traffic on the Bicycle Boulevard, reducing the amount of cut-through traffic is also important. The plans for 4th Avenue/Fontana are not as restrictive as the 3rd Street Bikeway but still introduce movement restrictions for motor vehicles that drive on the Bicycle Boulevard. Those restrictions occur only at major intersections. Cars will still be able to access 4th Avenue/Fontana from any of the major roads, i.e., they may turn from Ft. Lowell Road onto Fontana, but they will not be able to drive up Fontana and cross Ft. Lowell Road to continue driving north or south. Cars will have to turn onto Ft. Lowell at that point. This treatment is consistent with existing treatments along 3rd Street and has worked well to safely get bicyclists and pedestrians across the street and reduce the number of cars along the corridor. Third Street at some intersections does not allow traffic to enter the Bikeway from the main streets.
- **Prioritized Travel for Bicycles**– To facilitate movements along the Bicycle Boulevard for bicycles, existing stop signs will be converted to yield signs. The yield signs will be installed in conjunction with a traffic circle at the intersection. In some cases, stop signs can be turned to face the side street, to keep bike traffic moving and not having to make unnecessary stops. Also, at some intersections, like Speedway and Grant, two Bike Boxes will be installed. Like the Bike Box at 6th Street and Highland, when the light is red, bicycles will be able to pull into the box and wait in front of cars. When the light turns green, bikes go first, followed by cars. Bike Boxes make the bicyclist more visible to motorists and they also reduce the chances of a ‘right-hook’ type of accident where the car turns right, cutting off the path of the bicyclist.
- **Intersection Treatments**– To help with crossing busy roads and associated with the traffic reduction element, the City will be converting the HAWK signal at Fontana and Ft. Lowell into a TOUCAN signal, which is more accessible to bicycles. At the Glenn Street crossing, a median refuge will be installed to calm traffic along Glenn and will also assist crossing pedestrians.
- **Other Treatments**– Three kiosks or information areas are planned along the corridor to let users know what the Bicycle Boulevard is initially and will have regional bike route information on them. An on-street bike parking corral has already been installed in front of Epic Café along University Blvd. at 4th Avenue to help serve bike parking in that area and to free up room for pedestrians along the sidewalk by moving the racks from the sidewalk to the roadway. Street trees to help shade the corridor will also be installed eventually. The pavement on 4th Avenue between Speedway and University will also be smoothed up with this project.

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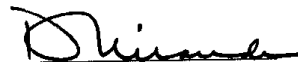
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Operating Cost and Maintenance Input – Because the Bicycle Boulevard will use existing residential streets, the cost of maintaining the facility will be negligible as the streets are already maintained by the City.

Financial Considerations – The project is funded by the RTA within the Greenways, Pathways, Bikeways, and Sidewalks Element. It is also included in the 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which is produced by Pima Association of Governments (TIP ID#38.09).

Additional project related information can be found on the Tucson Department of Transportation website at www.dot.tucsonaz.gov/projects/bikeboulevards.

Respectfully submitted,



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Deputy City Manager

RM/JamesGlock/TT/ts
Transportation

Attachment: 4th Avenue/Fontana Project Fact Sheet

SS/SEP21-10-355